

Claims

In the Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for engaging, rotating and removing the cap of a tire inflation valve stem, wherein[[,]] the apparatus comprises:

a handle member;

a generally rigid shaft member having an inboard end attached to the handle member and further having an outboard end;

a cap removal unit including a resiliently deformable cap engaging member having a longitudinal axis aligned with the shaft member, an inboard end connected to the outboard end of the shaft member, and an outboard end provided with a passageway that extends ~~at least partially into~~ along the entire longitudinal axis of the cap engaging member, wherein[[,]] the outboard end of the passageway is dimensioned to frictionally engage a cap of a tire inflation valve stem, wherein the cap engaging member is further provided with a tensioning band spaced inwardly from the outboard end of the cap engaging member, the tensioning band being disposed to limit expansion of the cap engaging member whereby travel of the cap into the outboard end of the passageway is limited, wherein the cap engaging member includes an intermediate portion disposed between the outboard end of the shaft member and the tensioning band, whereby the cap engaging member may be resiliently deformed out of alignment with the shaft member to access the cap of the valve stem.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Canceled)

4. (Currently Amended) The apparatus as in claim ~~[[3]]~~ 1 ~~[[;]]~~ ,wherein~~[[,]]~~ said passageway has an inboard end dimensioned to frictionally engage the outboard end of the shaft member.

5. (Cancelled)

6. (Currently Amended) The apparatus as in claim ~~[[5]]~~ 4 ~~[[;]]~~ ,wherein~~[[,]]~~ the cap engaging member is further provided with a securing band for captively engaging the shaft member relative to the cap engaging member

7. (Canceled)

8. (Cancelled)